

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for operating a portable computing device, the method comprising:
2 coupling a signal line accessible through an outlet of the portable computing
3 device to a communication device;
4 detecting a signal on the signal line to determine whether the communication
5 device is actively connected to a portable computing device; and
6 suspending execution of at least a portion of a program, the portion of the program
7 reducing power consumption of the portable computing device.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 suspending occurrence of a timeout feature, wherein the time-out feature significantly
4 reduces power consumption of the portable computing device.

1 3. The method of claim 2, including sending communications from the portable
2 computing device using the communication device when the communication device is
3 actively connected to the portable computing device.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein coupling a signal line includes extending the
2 signal line to a pin element of a pin connector forming the outlet.

1 5. The method of claim 2, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 selectively suspending the occurrence of the time-out feature when the communication
4 device is actively coupled.

1 6. The method of claim 2, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 disabling the time-out feature while the communication device is actively coupled.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting the signal includes measuring a voltage
2 level of the signal.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting a signal from the communication device
2 includes coupling the portable computing device to the communication device using a pin
3 connector, and wherein one pin in the pin connector extends into the signal line.

1 9. The method of claim 2, including launching a program that is downloaded to the
2 portable computing device through the communication device once the occurrence of the
3 time-out feature is suspended.

1 10. The method of claim 2, including launching a program once the occurrence of the
2 time-out feature is suspended, the program providing a display selected from a group of
3 displays consisting of a world clock, a digital image stored from a digital camera device,
4 and a display of real-time information provided by a data network.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 determining a programmable backlight of a display to be operational while the
4 communication device is coupled.

1 12. The method of claim 1, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 programming a backlight of a display to be selectively operational while the
4 communication device is coupled.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein suspending execution of at least a portion of a
2 program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing device includes
3 programming the display to be operational when the backlight of the display is selected to
4 be operational.

1 14. The method of claim 12, including executing a program upon detecting the signal
2 on the signal line to reorganize an output arrangement of a database.

1 15. A detachable assembly, comprising:
2 a communication device; and
3 a portable computing device adapted to couple to the communication device, the
4 portable computing device including:
5 a signal line that is adapted to couple to an output node of the
6 communication device; and

7 a processor coupled to detect a signal on the signal line to determine
8 whether the communication device is actively connected to the portable computing
9 device;

10 wherein the processor is programmed to suspend execution of at least a
11 portion of a program upon detecting the communication device, the portion of the
12 program reducing power consumption of the portable computing device.

1 16. The detachable assembly of claim 15, wherein the communication device includes
2 an alternating current adapter for supplying power to the portable computing device.

1 17. The detachable assembly of claim 16, wherein the processor suspends an
2 occurrence of a timeout feature that significantly reduces power consumption by the
3 portable computing device.

1 18. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the signal line extends to a pin
2 element of a pin connector forming the outlet.

1 19. The detachable assembly of claim 15, wherein the processor selectively suspends
2 an occurrence of the time-out feature upon the communication device actively coupling to
3 the portable computing device.

1 20. The detachable assembly of claim 15, wherein the processor disables the time-out
2 feature upon the communication device actively coupling to the portable computing
3 device.

1 21. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the signal is a voltage level
2 provided by the output node of the communication device.

1 22. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the portable computing device
2 couples to the communication device using a pin connector, and wherein one pin in the pin
3 connector extends into the signal line.

1 23. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein a program is downloaded to the
2 portable computing device using the communication device once the occurrence of the
3 time-out feature is suspended.

1 24. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the processor launches a program
2 once the occurrence of the time-out feature is suspended, the program providing a display
3 selected from a group of displays consisting of a clock, a digital image, and a display of
4 real-time information provided by a data network.

1 25. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the processor suspends execution of
2 at least a portion of a program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing
3 device, the portion of the program providing a backlight of a display to be operational
4 while the communication device is coupled.

1 26. The detachable assembly of claim 17, wherein the processor suspends execution of
2 at least a portion of a program for reducing power consumption of the portable computing
3 device, the portion of the program providing a backlight of a display to be selectively
4 operational while the communication device is coupled.

1 27. The detachable assembly of claim 26, wherein the portion of the program provides
2 for the display to be operational when the backlight of the display is selected to be
3 operational.

1 28. The detachable assembly of claim 15, wherein the portion of the program provides
2 for reorganizing an output arrangement of a data base.

1 29. A portable computing device, comprising:
2 means for coupling a signal line accessible through an outlet of the portable
3 computer device to a communication device;
4 means for detecting a signal on the signal line to determine whether the
5 communication device is actively connected to a portable computing device; and
6 means for suspending execution of at least a portion of a program, the portion of
7 the program reducing power consumption of the portable computing device.